



State of Illinois

THE JUSTICE, EQUITY, AND OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE

Executive Order 2019-09



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Office of Lieutenant Governor
Juliana Stratton



“The COVID-19 pandemic has turned our world upside down. And we not only have to address the social and health inequities during this pandemic which have hit Black and Hispanic/Latinx communities disproportionately hard, but we have to advocate for policies through an equity lens to ensure that moving forward our communities are not left behind.”

- Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton



The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative: An Introduction

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker signed Executive Order 2019-09 to establish the Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative on February 11, 2019. Led by the Lieutenant Governor, the JEO Initiative will help fulfill the Administration's vision of reimagining public safety for the State of Illinois through restorative approaches and a trauma-informed lens. The JEO Initiative staff advise the Lieutenant Governor on transformative justice policy and legislation, oversee several criminal justice-related agencies, and convene advocates and stakeholders to advance equity-focused measures and practices.

Agencies under the Lieutenant Governor's purview:

- Concealed Carry Licensing Review Board (CCLRB)
- Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA)
- Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ)
- Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board (ILETSB)
- Prisoner Review Board (PRB)
- Sentencing Policy Advisory Council (SPAC)

As a first-of-its-kind effort, the JEO Initiative serves as a model for the nation's efforts to reform the justice system by:

- a. Convening and creating a collaborative environment, especially among stakeholders, state agencies and organizations they work with.
- b. Improving communications across state agencies and ensuring a coordinated, holistic effort to transform the justice system and implement those changes.
- c. Supporting research and pilot programs that will test groundbreaking efforts to reform the justice system, provide data analysis to assess program efficacy, and guide new efforts.
- d. Weighing in on decision making to ensure the different branches of Illinois government work proactively to create a more fair and equitable justice system.

The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative: COVID-19 and Goals and Deliverables

Over the last two years, communities across Illinois have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we unearth the deep inequities exacerbated by the pandemic, the JEO Initiative is focused on healing and transformative justice reform efforts to strengthen and address the root causes of justice involvement. As the State continued to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) admitted 12,581 residents and provided 17,275 exits during the last fiscal year (FY2021). Illinois is in the process of shifting its approach to justice, extending it beyond policing, jails, and prisons. This report outlines the JEO Initiative's work in 2021 and priorities for the 2023 fiscal year (July 2022-June 2023).



Goals

The JEO Initiative's work spotlights four goals that guide short-term and long-term efforts:

1. Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration.
2. Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system.
3. Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations in correctional facilities.
4. Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism.

2020 -2021

The JEO Initiative advanced various deliverables for each of these goals between 2020-2021.

Goal #1: Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration

The Restore, Reinvest and Renew (R3) Program:

In collaboration with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), the Office of the Lieutenant Governor has implemented the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew Program, which reinvests 25% of adult-use cannabis tax revenues into communities most impacted by the War on Drugs. The R3 Program Board approved the first round of awardees' funding, announced in January 2020. At that time, the Board awarded \$31.5 million in grants to 80 organizations that provide violence prevention, economic development, civil legal aid, youth development and reentry services throughout the state. All grantees in good standing were renewed for another year of funding. In the summer of 2021, the R3 Program Board approved the granting of \$3.5 million in violence response funding.

\$45 million in funding is now available for the second round of R3 Program funding—totaling \$80 million of funding so far available for combating the harmful impacts of the War on Drugs and criminalization of disenfranchised communities.

Based on feedback from the first round of grantees and applicants, ICJIA and the Lieutenant Governor's office implemented changes to the Notice of Funding Opportunity, or NOFO, to support small organizations. Applicants will only compete for funding against organizations of a similar size, and 75% of funding will be designated for organizations with a budget of \$5 million or less, or that have been operating in community for less than five years.

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor and ICJIA are focusing on outreach and technical assistance efforts to ensure that small, community-based organizations that serve neighborhoods eligible for funding can become compliant with Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) requirements prior to the release of the NOFO. Emily Harwell, who filled the newly created role of R3 manager within the Lieutenant Governor's office, led the office's work on communications and community engagement.

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



To support organizations in submitting a successful application, ICJIA offers a free, self-guided online course that covers the basics of applying for state grants, including setting a budget, writing a program narrative and establishing GATA compliance. Registered participants are also able to access live sessions to ask questions about GATA compliance and the components of a grant application. The Office of the Lieutenant Governor and ICJIA have provided informational briefings to the Illinois Legislative Black and Latino Caucuses, and staff have visited communities across Illinois to speak with leaders in the reentry fields, restorative justice hubs, and other providers in Latino and Black-serving organizations.



Lt. Governor Stratton (third from left) hears from Enlace Executive Director Katya Nuques and staff prior to a R3 Program information session - December 2021

Children of Incarcerated Parents Task Force: A partnership between State Rep. Delia Ramirez, the JEO Initiative, and Cabrini Green Legal Aid, the Children of Incarcerated Parents Task Force was established by legislative statute to develop recommendations that will improve outcomes for children of incarcerated parents. The Task Force's findings were announced in January 2021. Key recommendations include ensuring family visitation options at all detention facilities statewide, involving youth in the development of training for law enforcement, and creating a standing commission to coordinate work on these issues.

Violence Prevention Strategy: The JEO Initiative collaborated with ICJIA and several state agencies to develop a Four-Year Statewide Violence Prevention Strategy. Through research and evidence-based practices, a review of programs and strategies, needs assessments, and recommendations for funding were based on five violence prevention goals that include: stopping violence and promoting safety; supporting children, youth, and families by emphasizing programs that foster social connectedness and belonging; advancing equity; supporting health; and promoting collaboration across state, municipal, and community-based agencies..



JEO INITIATIVE



Governor Pritzker and Lt. Governor Stratton (center) meet with violence prevention experts during a community listening session at the Inner City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) - September 2021

Charitable Trust Stabilization Board – Office of the Treasurer: The Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund is a statewide program that seeks to help small non-profit organizations with annual budgets of \$1 million or less. Programs are funded through the filing fees non-profits pay to incorporate with the State of Illinois. The State Treasurer’s Office and an 11-member committee assist with the management and guidelines of the Fund and provide grant recommendations to Treasurer Michael Frerich’s office. The committee consists of appointees from state government agencies and six private citizens. Ariana Correa, Program Manager of the JEO Initiative, serves on the Charitable Trust Stabilization Board as a designee from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. The Fund’s Spring 2021 grant cycle (January 2-March 31) includes program areas concerning food and housing, as well as workforce and economic development. Special attention is given to organizations within a “depressed area,” defined as “an area in which pervasive poverty, unemployment, and economic distress exist.”

Goal #2: Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system.

The Illinois Mental Health Summit: The JEO Initiative partnered with the Illinois Supreme Court’s Mental Health Task Force and National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to host a mental health summit series to improve court and community responses towards individuals with mental illness. As a final product of the summit series, the NCSC drafted and issued the 2020 Illinois Mental Health Summit Report. In December 2021, the Illinois Supreme Court and NCSC hosted an online event marking the report’s release to present an overview of national initiatives, report findings, and next steps for the Task Force.

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Goal #3: Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations in correctional facilities.

John Howard Association (JHA) Prison Monitoring: In November 2020, the JEO Initiative began facilitating discussions between IDOC and the John Howard Association (JHA) to increase information sharing. Due to COVID-19 outbreaks in some IDOC facilities, the JHA prison-monitoring team was disallowed inside of the prisons because of health risk factors. JHA monitors state prisons and publicly reports its findings and recommendations. Some of that work includes onsite prison-monitoring visits, conducting interviews, and surveying thousands of people who are incarcerated in Illinois—and staff who work inside the prisons—in order to gather their thoughts, concerns, perceptions and experiences. These discussions continue to provide transparency, accountability and alternative options to in-person prison monitoring.

Goal #4: Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism.

State ID Pilot Program: The JEO Initiative collaborated with the Office of Illinois First Lady MK Pritzker, the Secretary of State's (SOS) Office, and IDOC to develop a program that arranges for State IDs to be provided to people released from IDOC facilities. As of November 24, 2021, a total of 403 State IDs have been processed and 20 IDOC facilities are now able to provide State IDs to people who are being released. This pilot includes coordination between IDOC, SOS, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), local clerk offices' departments of vital records, and the Social Security Administration in an effort to drastically improve the chances of successful reentry by addressing a barrier that impacts thousands of people who are released annually from IDOC in need of a State ID.



Governor Pritzker and Lt. Governor Stratton (center) meet with violence prevention experts during a community listening session at the Inner City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) - September 2021



Restorative Justice Pilot Program: The JEO Initiative is working with the Illinois Prisoner Review Board (PRB), IDOC, the Office of the Attorney General, the Cook County State's Attorney Office, and Adler University's Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice to expand options for crime survivors, as well as those who caused harm, that are based in restorative justice. This will include a Restorative Justice Pilot Program that allows a person who has survived a violent crime to initiate a process that works toward sitting down in a facilitated session with the person who harmed them. The program will also include an apology letter bank component that will allow an incarcerated person to write a letter of apology to their victim. The Restorative Justice Pilot Program aims to address personal and systemic trauma by repairing harm between the primary stakeholders and communities that have been impacted.

Working Group Returning Residents (WGRR) – Office of the Mayor: The JEO Initiative collaborated on the WGRR with local government agencies, community stakeholders, and people impacted by the justice system. These efforts provided recommendations around critical reentry issues such as access to housing, healthcare/wellness, and economic mobility/employment. The collaborative effort led to the creation of the Interagency Reentry Council and a new Director of Reentry role that will focus on providing support for people released from incarceration to the City of Chicago.

College Savings Program for Children of Formerly Incarcerated Parents:

The JEO Initiative is working with the Office of the Treasurer to incorporate partner organizations that serve people re-entering from the justice system into the Treasurer's larger child savings account program.

2021 - 2022

The Initiative will work towards the following set of deliverables in the 2022 fiscal year.

Goal #1: Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration

Restore, Reinvest and Renew (R3) Program:

The Lieutenant Governor's office and ICJIA will execute future R3 funding rounds to reinvest in communities that have been disproportionately affected by disinvestment and the War on Drugs.



JEO Initiative Director Delaney providing remarks to the Westside Collaborative Project, which received a \$1.8 million R3 grant - September 2021

Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force: The Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force is a statewide effort that seeks to proactively help immigrant communities in the state. The Department of Human Services and a 27-member task force assist with examining the disparities in immigrant communities that lead to educational, financial, and housing insecurity, among others. Ariana Correa, Program Manager of the JEO Initiative, serves on the Task Force as a designee from the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. The Task Force's areas of focus include but are not limited to: COVID-19's impact, access to services, disbursement of funds, and state practices by Immigration Customs Enforcement. The Task Force will report their recommendations and findings to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and General Assembly.

Trauma-Informed Illinois: The JEO Initiative will be collaborating with leaders and agencies across the state to ensure synergy around trauma-informed and healing-centered efforts in Illinois. The Illinois Justice Project, Illinois ACEs Response Collaborative, Center for Childhood Resilience, and the Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition—along with the JEO Initiative—are among some of the partners spearheading this effort.

Goal #2: Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system.

Illinois Mental Health Task Force: The JEO Initiative will continue to collaborate with and serve on the Illinois Mental Health Task Force to assist with restorative solutions for people with mental health issues interacting with the justice system.



JEO INITIATIVE

Goal #3: Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations in correctional facilities.

John Howard Association (JHA) Prison Monitoring: The JEO Initiative will continue to work in partnership with IDOC and John Howard Association to ensure transparency and accountability are integral components of the prison monitoring information-sharing process.

Higher Education in Prison (HEP) Task Force: The HEP Task Force was created through House Joint Resolution 27, with a focus on making Illinois a national leader in higher education prison programs. Orlando Mayorga, the McCormick Reentry Policy Coordinator Fellow for the JEO Initiative, will serve as chair and collaborate with HEP alumni and experts, legislators, and other stakeholders to collect and analyze data, assess barriers and opportunities to develop an action plan composed of data driven policies with the goal of expanding quality HEP programs.



Lt. Governor Stratton (fifth from left) joins JEO Initiative Director Yaacov Delaney, Representative Daniel Swanson (74th District), Mayor of Kewanee Gary Moore, IDOC Director Rob Jeffreys, community stakeholders, and IDOC staff at Kewanee Life Skills Re-entry Center - November 2021

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Goal #4: Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism.

Illinois Resentencing Task Force: The Illinois Resentencing Task Force was signed into law by Governor J.B. Pritzker in July 2021. This statewide Task Force was created to study innovative ways to reduce the Illinois prison population and to ensure sentences of imprisonment will promote justice and public safety. JEO Director Yaacov Delaney will serve on this Task Force, along with other experts and stakeholders who will consider alternative options for incarcerated people, state's attorney's, and judges to file resentencing motions to allow second considerations for people who have previously received long sentences.

Illinois Reentry Council: The Initiative will continue to collaborate with the Illinois Justice Project (IJP), state and local government partners, community providers and stakeholders to provide a streamlined, coordinated effort in the delivery of reentry services and resources for justice system impacted people through the state.

Conclusion

The above deliverables and goals are not an exhaustive list of the JEO Initiative's projects or priorities. The work done by the JEO team is driven by the mission to infuse empathy and compassion into policy in a holistic way. While reinvisioning what public safety can look like in Illinois, the Initiative will be convening with stakeholders to assist in the work towards these projected deliverables through the next year as the State continues to address the COVID-19 pandemic. The JEO Initiative thanks the staff from the Office of the Governor, as well as members of the Illinois General Assembly, agency heads, and community stakeholders for their unwavering commitment towards expanding equity and opportunity across Illinois.



Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois
10/22 500 copies IOC122-1124

